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Editorial: MAP #9 Book as Archival Space and Artistic Medium

2018

Veröffentlichungsversion / published version
Zeitschriftenartikel / journal article

Empfohlene Zitierung / Suggested Citation:

Büscher, Barbara; Cramer, Franz Anton: Editorial: MAP #9 Book as Archival Space and Artistic Medium. In: *MAP - Media | Archive | Performance*. MAP #9 Das Buch als Archiv-Raum und Medium der Kunst, Jg. 9 (2018), Nr. 1, S. 1–4.

Erstmalig hier erschienen / Initial publication here:

<https://performap.de/map/9/editorial9engl>

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Welcome to the 9th edition of the e-journal

MAP - Media | Archive | Performance

MAP #9

Book as Archival Space and Artistic Medium

In this ninth issue of MAP we take a closer look at the role media play for and in various archiving processes in the performance-based arts. One point of focus are the specific practices of ordering and organisation that the respective medium calls for by virtue of its material and media qualities. We investigate the history of media used as well as their forms of accessibility, such as distribution, availability, and portability. Another focal point is what can grow out of a playful, artistic handling of media, sometimes even surpassing their functionality.

After film and moving image, which were at the core of the previous issue, books move to the centre of attention in MAP #9.

“In an endless series of catalogues, we document visual art worldwide. Thus, an immense archive accumulates in museums and archives, a kind of ‘shadow museum’ in reproduced form. Through these publications we write a second history of today’s art industry and with it, the question of how we deal with art.” (Walter Nikkels)

On the cover of a slim volume of his lectures, typographer and exhibition architect Walter Nikkels placed the two terms ‘archive’ and ‘space’, ascribing them to the book as a medium. He describes it as the site where artistic processes, performances and exhibitions are (transformed,) stored and documented. The book, whether catalogue or monograph, is something that lasts. It is also something that by means of its design, its physical presence and its representational claims, promises and expresses something other than, say, a website. At least this is what the continuously high esteem accorded to books suggests.

The first part of our focus **Books + Art. Catalogue. Documentation. Archive.** explores the relationship between art and books. Elaborate volumes on two key women artists in the history of

performance art – VALIE EXPORT and Joan Jonas – serve as the outset for Barbara Büscher's investigation of which historical material and documentation of artistic processes is selected in these books. How is the material presented and what kind of access does it give to their histories?

A conversation about the book accompanying the exhibition on Latvian artist Hardijs Lediņš between the two Latvian curators Ieva Astahovska and Māra Žeikare and Estonian art critic Indrek Grigor explores questions such as how to select historical documents from the extensive oeuvre of one of the most important Latvian performance and action artists, or the socio-political context of the 1980s and 1990s, in which he was artistically active. The book also turns out to be one of the few opportunities to give Lediņš' work more weight as it garners more attention on an international level.

Collecting flyers, zines and other printed material intended for highly situated art-activism in order to solidify them in an archive and book seems paradoxical. Lucie Ortmann discusses this and other issues with archivist and editor Lisa Darms, who was head of the *The Riot Grrrls Collection* in New York.

In a further article, Barbara Büscher discusses findings on the history of the *Nova Scotia series – Source Materials of the Contemporary Arts*, edited by Kasper König and later Benjamin Buchloh at Nova Scotia College of Art and Design in Halifax in the 1970s and 1980s. The series is marked by questions of authorship, which resulted in close collaborations between artists and editors.

A short excerpt from the radio feature *Textverarbeitung* [Processing Texts], in which Joachim Büthe discusses making books in times of digital publication with designers, publishers and various scholars widens this issue's scope beyond the field of art/books.

The second part of our focus, **Art + Book: Appropriation. Format. (Exhibition) Object** reverses the perspective and takes a look at art works that use books as the starting point of artistic appropriation, or as a site where artistic work is organised in a specific manner. Art publications created in the context of conceptual art and concrete poetry since the 1960s can offer a frame of reference for contemporary practices.

At the beginning of the second chapter, we present a conversation with Michalis Pichler, artist and co-founder of *Miss Read – The Berlin Art Book Fair*, which celebrates its tenth anniversary in 2018.

In her article, Regine Ehleiter offers insight into editions published by the West Berlin gallery *situationen 60*, conceived as a portable gallery by Barbara and Christian Chruixin in the early 1960s. They invited artists to convert their work according to the parameters of their publication, a foldable model of a gallery.

Stephanie Götsch uses the example of Channa Horwitz' work, which is centred on the documentation and transformation of movement, to show how the leporello fold became a form for her to bring together stability and movability.

Antonin Artaud: dessins et portraits [*The Secret Art of Antonin Artaud*, 1998], published in 1988 by Paule Thévenin und Jacques Derrida, serves as the outset for Melanie Reichert to examine the importance of writing and drawing in relation to Artaud's *Theatre of Cruelty*. She establishes a trace from Artaud's quest for the rehabilitation of the body in theatre to his specific treatment of paper in his drawings.

ON VIEW in these two parts we present three short presentations of recently published books that realise and address various aspects of the archive.

The third chapter, **Questions of the Archive** is a continuation of our series **Archive**.

Analyses. Lucie Ortmann and Franz Anton Cramer present the findings of their research on the repository of Haus der Kunst Munich and the archive of the festival steirischer herbst in Graz, Austria. The latter's extensive inventory and presentation of the festival's history since 1968 marks the end of Kaup-Hasler's artistic direction and, in our view, can serve as a model for dealing with historical material in the independent performing arts.

Additionally, Nerea Ayerbe shares the findings of her empirical research on how performance art is handled in the collections of major Spanish museums. The author finds that in contrast to the widespread topos of immateriality as the defining quality of performance, it is repeatedly ascribed the status of material by means of artefacts, which, in turn, can become part of the museum apparatus. Ayerbe suggests rethinking the definition of performance to come closer to the realities of its reception.

The fourth and final chapter, **Diagrams – Visualizing Knowledge** introduces a field of research, which we will continue to discuss in various aspects in this and future issues. Here we begin the endeavour with two contributions: Sabine Folie, head of the VALIE EXPORT Center.

Forschungszentrum für Medien- und Performancekunst since 2017, elaborates the scholarly appraisal and organisation of the artist's living bequest in diagrammatic approaches and shares a diagram conceived specifically for the exhibition space.

Architect Dennis Pohl investigates diagrammatic techniques in architecture. He traces a historical connection from the age of Enlightenment to EU architecture in Brussels. Phenomena of movement

and how they are controlled are key elements in the analysis of innovations in planning and urban space. “Mobile Architectures” will be the focus in MAP #10.

Translation: Margarethe Clausen

The editors thank all authors for their generous cooperation and their patience for publication delays. Comments and suggestions are always welcome.

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Leipzig and Berlin, May and December 2018

ISSN 2191-0901

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